



BACI E-NEWS

Building Active Communities Initiative

MARCH 2014

Happy Spring!

Even though it is technically "spring" in Montana it always feels like winter does not want to loosen its tight grip just yet. In any case, I hope this time of year finds you enjoying the multiple seasons we are experiencing! Great progress continues to be made with our BACI communities and we have some exciting updates for you in this newsletter.

We have just completed our second BACI Action Institute which took place in Bozeman March 18-20. Six communities (Anaconda, Belgrade, Dillon, Hamilton, Polson, and Whitefish) participated and brought teams of five highly engaged leaders to the Institute (learn more on pages 3 and 4).



2014 BACI Action Institute

We also had an exciting opportunity to share our work on the national stage. We presented at the New Partners for Smart Growth Conference that took place in Denver this past February. Two Montana mayors, Mayor Larry Bonderud from Shelby and Mayor Jerry Jimison from Glendive joined Cathy Costakis (BACI staff) and Roger Millar (Smart Growth America and BACI Advisor) to present on the work that we are doing. It was great to share the progress these two communities have made as well as share the framework of the BACI project with a national audience. Roger Millar also presented in our BACI Webinar Series in January. Recordings and PowerPoint presentations for all our BACI webinars are available at <http://healthinfo.montana.edu/RHI%20Webinars.html>. More webinars are planned for 2014.

Glendive Progress!

The City of Glendive has made tremendous progress in the past year since they attended the Action Institute. Among their accomplishments are: forming a multi-sector leadership group called Building Active Glendive (BAG) and developing, with broad community input, a Glendive Master Trails Plan that will improve connectivity for all users and is scheduled to be adopted into the new Growth Plan update.



New trail to Makoshika State Park!



**Communities
Transforming**

To make healthy living easier

2014 BACI Action Institute

On March 18th more than 45 people gathered in Bozeman, MT for the 2014 BACI Action Institute. The mayor of Bozeman, Jeff Krauss, opened the workshop which spanned three days and brought teams from six Montana communities for an in-depth training on active transportation and active community design.

National expert and keynote speaker Mark Fenton facilitated a lively conversation to build the case for safe and active communities. His presentation covered the key elements of active community design that

encourage physical activity: varied destinations within walk, bike, & transit distance; a connected network of facilities (trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, transit); designs that are functional & inviting for pedestrians, bicyclists, & transit users and safe & accessible for all ages, incomes, and abilities.

Mark used Bozeman as a "learning laboratory" and led the group on a "walking audit" and bus tour with Bozeman's Streamline transit bus. The goal of the walking audit was to train the participants to see differently and then give them the skills and resources to conduct walking audits in their own communities. Gary Vodehnal, Gallatin Valley Land Trust, assisted with planning the tour and provided local context for the learning experience.



Action Institute, Bozeman

Walking Audit
includes disability
advocates.

Bozeman



Action Institute (continued from page 2)

New to the Action Institute this year were presentations from Meg Traci, MT Disability and Health Program, and Eric Kohring, Montana Independent Living Project, who discussed the importance of including accessibility advocates and using universal design principles when working to improve the built environment for active travel. We also included a walking tour of the downtown with Chris Naumann, Executive Director of the Bozeman Downtown Partnership, who talked about the need for more housing choices and transportation options in the downtown to support a vibrant downtown economy. Two highlights new to this year's Institute were Roger Millar, Smart Growth America and Director of the National Complete Streets Coalition, who presented on "Planning for Economic and Fiscal Health" and Jerry Jimison, Mayor of the City of Glendive and 2013 BACI team member, who shared Glendive's progress since last year's Institute. Both presentations were well received and marked high on evaluations from participants.

We would like to thank our 2014 BACI Sponsors: Sonoran Institute and Western Transportation Institute

Action Shots



Downtown Walking Tour



Bus Tour using Streamline Transit bus



Mark Fenton getting feedback from participants on the last segment of the walk audit: participants were asked to rank 1-10 how well they felt that segment scored on the four elements of active design (mentioned on page one).



Karen Sargeant, Parks Director, City of Polson, gives a presentation on Polson's Action Plan for when they return home. All the teams gave very inspiring presentations that were well thought out and included many innovative solutions to community challenges.

The six BACI Action Teams left the training inspired and are now working to engage more partners and obtain community feedback on their Action Plans. Many of the teams have already met and are on their way toward reaching their goals.

"We now have wonderful, doable suggestions for our town. Very worthwhile, practical guidance."

2014 BACI Action Institute participant

Our Team

Building Active Community Initiative Staff:

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Get in touch:

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The Building Active Communities Initiative (BACI) is a project of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services' Nutrition and Physical Activity Program (NAPA) in partnership with Montana State University's Office of Rural Health, the Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department, and RiverStone Health.

The BACI project is supported by a Community Transformation Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The goal of BACI is to create or enhance community environments so that people of all ages, abilities and income levels can safely walk, bike or take public transportation to places they need to go.



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